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In this issue:

ALB Workshop ♦ Potluck ♦ Contact List ♦ Winter Projects ♦ Spring Planning ♦ 2010 Stewardship Report

2nd Asian Longhorned Beetle Monitoring Workshop



Monday, January 24, 5:30 - 7 PM

Water Treatment Facility, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Although Asian longhorned beetles have only been found locally in Boston and Central Massachusetts, Cambridge street trees, backyard trees, and parks are still at risk, and only a rapid response can reduce negative impacts. Come learn how to help protect them by learning to identify the Asian longhorned beetle, recognize signs of tree damage, identify host trees, and share your ideas for how to monitor them in your neighborhood and at Fresh Pond. *Presently we'd like to include ALB monitoring along with collecting current tree health data for specimen trees (those previously identified as big and special) throughout the reservation.* This training is provided by the Department of Agricultural Resources in collaboration with the Cambridge Water Department and the Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation. To register, please contact Deb Albenberg at 617-349-6489 or fpr@cambridgema.gov.

Fresh Pond February Potluck (FP²) & Movie Night!

Monday, February 7th, 5:30 – 8:30

Water Treatment Facility

2nd floor conference room (most likely)

Come to the water department to eat tasty food, relax with really nice people and enjoy a depressing movie about climate change, ocean acidification, and potential impacts on biodiversity (website: <http://www.aseachange.net/>). Let Deb know if you can come.



Contact List

Please help Deb make a Volunteer Steward Contact List by sending me an email RIGHT NOW with your *phone #* and *address*: dalbenberg@cambridgema.gov. Also feel free to let me know you'd like to join a winter project (see below) or RSVP for the beetle workshop and potluck.

Winter Projects

Here are 4 ways to stay connected and help out at the same time!

- Design and build **floating islands** on Little Fresh Pond
- Learn how to keep an eye out for Asian Longhorned Beetles at Fresh Pond to join an early spring **Beetle Brigade** while collecting important specimen tree information
- Help plan a Fresh Pond and city-wide **Black Swallow-wort Pod Squad**
- Help publicize city-wide **Weekend Weedouts** once/month

Spring Planning (current thoughts on the Fresh Pond Reservation Volunteer Stewardship Program)

I. More effective monitoring and maintenance:

Weekend Weedouts – 1st Sunday of the month, 1 – 4pm

- April: purple loosestrife
 - May: garlic mustard
 - June: mugwort
 - July: thistle
 - August: black swallowwort
 - September: burdock
 - October: bittersweet
 - November: buckthorn
1. Lead volunteers in monthly surveys to map target species and extent of infestation
 2. Select one specific area to focus weekly volunteer weeding efforts: (Lusitania woods and meadow, for example) document existing plant species and environmental conditions, replant or reseed when possible and necessary
 3. Coordinate efforts with Water Dept. and New England Wildflower Society(NEWFS)

II. More volunteers/better recruitment & retention:

1. Find a way to make a volunteer email signup & questionnaire online
2. Find volunteer(s) to take photos that I could post online and use in flyers
1. Design a new flyer and brochure Create a new volunteer information packet with contact information, schedules, calendar, map, invasive plant info
3. Meet with other volunteer coordinators to get recruitment and program ideas: Emerald Necklace Conservancy, Mt Auburn Cemetery, Mystic River Watershed Assoc
4. Utilize Fresh Pond Day to get new recruits

5. Incorporate mini-volunteering opportunities in conjunction with programming, including NEWFS programs, and always offer information on how to do more
6. See if the Cambridge Chronicle would like to do a feature about FP weeders
7. Find out why volunteers come and what they get out of it
8. Have a “bring a friend” volunteer session
9. Try to accommodate a variety of schedules including weekdays and weekends, but also perhaps join morning sessions at Suzanna’s corner and invite volunteers to help

III. More interesting projects and opportunities to help out in addition to pulling weeds:

- site monitoring
- invasive plant mapping and monitoring
- nest box monitoring
- Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB)/specimen tree data collection and monitoring
- purple loosestrife monitoring
- planting at Black’s Nook and/or behind Neville
- seed collection and dispersal
- building floating islands
- organizing a city-wide black swallow-wort pod picking campaign
- chatting with folks who pass by and handing out information
- Fresh Pond Day tabling
- lead weeding sessions
- lead a CWD staff weeding event

IV. More effective communication:

1. Keep website updated and include seasonal calendar of meetups
2. Continue to send out monthly newsletters
3. Ask volunteers to contribute to newsletters
4. Send out bi-weekly emails of upcoming meetups
5. Have a couple more potlucks to share ideas and make changes
6. Make a contact list and make it available to volunteers to ride share or meet up

V. Focus on education and leadership development

1. Have an annual training day
2. Link NEWFS trainings and volunteer work – ask a volunteer to discuss volunteer opportunities at trainings and promote trainings at volunteer sessions
3. Encourage volunteers to lead sessions and take on other initiatives
4. Create a new volunteer information packet with contact information, schedules, calendar, map, invasive plant info

2010 Stewardship Report

This year's volunteer stewardship work began with weeding near the community gardens at Neville Place and in Suzanna's Corner followed with a very wet garlic mustard weed-out on Fresh Pond Day. After several more sessions weeding out Garlic Mustard, volunteers started removing black swallowwort, dame's rocket, and mugwort. Summer brought extreme heat, very little rain, mosquitoes and yellow jackets, beautiful summer flowers in the gardens, bioswales, woods, and meadows, endlessly rewarding us for our efforts. Fall brought sudden darkness to our evening sessions, but also many new avian visitors and sunsets on Fresh Pond. Working alongside wooly bears and stinkbugs, canvasbacks and ring-necked ducks, red-tailed and cooper's hawks, cormorants and goldfinches, nuthatches and woodpeckers, we ended this year's steward sessions with the evening flight of a bat over Lusitania Meadow.

In and around Lusitania Meadow, volunteer stewards spent over 100 hours weeding out a whole lot of mugwort, along with ragweed, thistle, cocklebur, burdock, wild lettuce, buckthorn, and cottonwood trees. We ended the season tossing milkweed, woolgrass, lance-leaved goldenrod, tall goldenrod, and blue vervain seeds around the meadow. We harvested these seeds from Kingsley bioswale and also spread echinacea seeds from the Butterfly Meadow.

Once again the Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation adopted the Kingsley Park Bioswale, weeding on Wednesday afternoons. By the end of the summer, after clearing out the burdock, mugwort, and bindweeds; the asters, goldenrods, vervains, and wild senna celebrated in purple, pink, white, and yellow abandon.

At the top of Glacken Slope volunteers weeded smartweed out of the rain garden and pulled hundreds of black locust seedlings, pokeweed, black swallowwort, black nightshade, and lamb's quarters. Although we found much spontaneous growth, we tried to make space for the many native plants and shrubs that miraculously survived planting prior to a very dry summer.

Volunteers worked in and around the Butterfly Meadow weeding out mugwort, bittersweet vines, spotted knapweed, cottonwoods, and buckthorn, while also dispersing vervain and aster seeds harvested from the Kingsley Park Bioswale.

Taking a look at specific invasive plants, garlic mustard weeding in the spring and early summer focused on the Weir Meadow area, the bottom of Glacken slope, and Kingsley bioswale. We spent several days working like elephants pulling out, hauling out, and piling up buckthorn trunks underneath the old beeches next to and along the edge of the Butterfly Meadow. Next spring we plan on planting wildflowers and understory shrubs in place of the buckthorn. We removed mugwort during at least 30 sessions this year, with the bulk of it coming out of Lusitania Meadow. Since various individuals contributed their efforts, it's hard to estimate exactly how much work was put into pulling burdock, though volunteers found a lot of it at Kingsley Park Bioswale, at Lusitania Meadow, and along the path in between. As black swallowwort pods taunted us along the fence, we devoted 15 weeding sessions to filling trash bags full of pods mostly from the perimeter fence.

The Woodland Restoration Demonstration Project weeding, planting, and watering began in early

April on Tuesdays In addition to help from Vinny, Milton, and Jose; Suzanna, Elizabeth, and Betsy made it through the dry summer heat by dragging in jugs of water from the community garden. While battling the voracious bunny with wire cages and fencing, they labeled most of the 110 native species in the garden for the Woodland Garden Visit, and gave visitors a printed species list. By late fall huge piles of buckthorn were harvested from the perimeter of the garden.

Nesting boxes around the Reservation are a joint effort of the Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation and the Water Department. This year, in addition to chickadee, tree swallow, and wood duck boxes, 4 screech owl boxes were added. According to Elizabeth, in the tree swallow boxes there were 10 successful tree swallow broods and 1 chickadee brood. Of the chickadee boxes, 2 were occupied by house wrens, and of the screech owl boxes, one housed an owl, and 2 more may have had owls in them.

Year 5 of the Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol Project is going strong with the beetle release in the spring and monitoring in the spring and fall. This fall, with both an afternoon and an evening inventory, 12 volunteers participated in data collection. Data and results from the study will be made available as soon as they are ready.

Volunteers working with Ranger Jean, both in groups and individually, refurbished the Huron Ave switchback, installed water bars, dug up burdock and pokeweed at Kingsley Park and along the Perimeter Road, weeded at the Weir Meadow, in the wildflower garden behind Neville and next to Maher Park parking lot, applied woodchips to woodland trails, and raked leaves on the Kingsley Park hill.

Volunteers also helped spray and monitor poison ivy test plots to measure the effectiveness of vinegar, salt, and dish detergent on the leaves. Due to the success of the two test plots, the solution will be used along the entire perimeter fence next spring to hopefully eliminate much more of the pesky native. Other valuable volunteer contributions include picking up trash, bringing snacks to share, saving a reclining tree using large rocks, repairing a broken shovel, bringing in seeds to disperse around the Reservation, taking over weeding sessions during the time between Emily's departure and my arrival and also during my absence, and delivering extra tools needed for large volunteer events.

In 2010, 30 volunteer stewards worked more hours, 760, and had more work sessions, 93, than ever before. Along with the 378 volunteer hours contributed by Pond Partners working with Jean, volunteers at Fresh Pond Reservation worked over 1100 hours in 2010. Many thanks to the fantastic volunteers who helped sustain the beautiful and rich habitats for all visitors and inhabitants of Fresh Pond Reservation.